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TWO EVENTS THAT PRESAGE A DURABLE PEACE

BY OSCAR S. STRAUS,

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One naturally asks: Why discuss the problems of a durable peace at this stage? Why draw plans for the rebuilding of the international household when the fire is still burning, and we do not quite yet know how extensive the devastation will be?

Such a discussion has great value, none the less, because it educates our own mind. It educates the minds of the American people. It prepares us for that larger world view which we must have in order to take our proper share in the reconstruction of the world. As the President has said, with such great wisdom, we are willing to contribute the Monroe Doctrine to this world reconstruction in order that there may be an international Monroe Doctrine.

To do that, we need to enlarge our views, we need education in this country for international mindedness. Most of us, I think, have changed our views considerably since this war began. Many of our wise pacifists have developed into belligerent pacifists. I confess I belong to that school myself. Before this war began, the proposition presented itself in the glaring phrase, "Utopia or hell!" Can you blame us for choosing Utopia? We did not realize that we had to wade through the jaws of hell to reach Utopia. America is ready to march through hell to secure democratic freedom and the permanent peace of the world, founded upon law and justice.

When the German Chancellor sought to justify the invasion of Belgium by characterizing the solemn international engagement for the neutralization of Belgium as a "scrap of paper," the phrase was new and expressive but the act itself was old. It was a glaring and concrete translation of the Machiavellian doctrine of state, which some of the leading German philosophers and militarists, notably Treitschke and Bernhardi, had been preaching for a generation, that might makes right and that when the highest interests

of a state, as interpreted by *itself*, came in conflict with the accepted principles of international right, that those interests must prevail, thus making of international right a “scrap of paper.”

The Berlin Congress of 1878, which met after the Turko-Russian War to prevent the threatening European War, was attended by the foremost statesmen of the great powers to adjust international differences and to create new Balkan states out of principalities under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire. The condition upon which these new states were constituted and recognized—notably Rumania, Bulgaria, and Serbia—was that under the new governments these states should grant to all of their inhabitants equality of rights, civil and religious.

The ink upon the charter which transformed the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia into the independent state of Rumania was scarcely dry when that kingdom violated the basic conditions of its foundation by not only denying equal rights to her Jewish population, but by oppressing them in body and soul under the most cruel and barbaric restrictions, so that thousands of them were forced to flee and many of them sought refuge in this and other countries. Other violations soon followed. Bulgaria attached to herself eastern Rumelia. A few years later Austria ruthlessly violated the Treaty of Berlin by annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina. This violation directly resulted in the tragedy at Serajebo when the Crown Prince and Princess of Austria were murdered. Out of this last violation the “scraps of paper” which tore up the Berlin Treaty lit the flame that directly produced this world war.

Prussian militarism on its side made a “scrap of paper” of her most solemn international engagements and caused the march of the mighty armies of Germany through Belgium, working havoc and ruin, violating every principle not only of peace but of war. Civilization was stunned and the allied nations, unprepared as they were, were compelled to come to the rescue.

Our country was slow and unwilling to believe that a people so enlightened as the Germans, who were in the vanguard in science and culture, would justify this violation and cruel breach of international faith on the part of their rulers and their militaristic establishment. But, alas, it soon became evident that the philosophies of their Treitschkes and Bernhardis, which had dethroned righteousness and justice, had eaten into the hearts and corrupted the

souls of the dominant classes in Germany. The American people, thoroughly imbued with the ideals of the fathers of our republic and with the doctrine of Monroe defining our continental policy, to hold aloof from the affairs of European states, were slow to recognize the real issues of the war, which involve the basic principles of civilization and the existence of free government throughout the world. When Germany began her submarine blockade and sunk the *Lusitania* and scores of other merchant ships, we were at last compelled to recognize that our rights and the rights of other neutral nations on land and sea, which had been built up through the process of ages by the gradual advance of civilization, were with shocking ruthlessness and outrageousness being violated with increasing horror by Germany.

Our government was patient and long enduring. With every effort to maintain and safeguard our rights as a neutral nation, German frightfulness projected us into this war. President Wilson clearly and cogently set forth all of this in his memorable address to Congress in a state paper which will rank among the great documents of the history of civilization giving the reasons which forced America to take up arms to uphold civilization, to "spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured."

He further stated: "A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants." The President in this memorable passage expounds an historical and clarifying truth: why in the past the concerted efforts on the part of nations to maintain a durable peace have invariably failed.

I refer to these circumstances, so recently transpired and which are fresh in our minds, in order to call more specific attention to the problems of a durable peace. Those problems have been not only exposed but clarified by the two important events which have within the past few weeks taken place; namely, the dethronement of Czardom with the establishment of free government in Russia, and the entrance of the United States into the world war to uphold free government.

Autocracies are necessarily militaristic. They have their birth in might and are maintained by might. Democracies have

their birth to secure equality of rights and therefore must rest on justice. With the success of the Allies it is not only fair to presume, but most probable, that there will be no menacing autocratic powers after the termination of the present war. The democratic nations will be preponderant and they will have learned the lesson to be vigilant, so that for the first time in history the leading powers of the world being democratic will be privileged to enter into a partnership that will give security, under a league of democracies, for the perpetuation of freedom and the equal rights of all its constituents, great and small. Under the domination of autocratic nations the international relationship of the world was in an anarchistic state. But under the league of democratic nations the international relationship of the world can and doubtless will be secured upon the broad and lasting foundation of international justice.

A BASIS FOR A DURABLE PEACE BETWEEN GERMANY AND ENGLAND

BY WILLIAM C. BULLITT,
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I shall not attempt to deal with the problems of durable peace in general but shall try to concentrate attention on one of those zones of hostility and hatred in which a conflagration is likely to arise and to wreck a durable peace after it has apparently been made.

There are, of course, many such zones in the world. There is the zone in the Pacific where the interests of the United States and Japan conflict. There is the zone in the Balkans where the interests of Russia and Austria conflict; but I wish to call your attention to the zone in the North Sea, where the hatred of Germany and England concentrates. And I shall try to explain the source of that hatred and a method by which it may be eliminated.

I do not think that the hostility of Germany and England springs primarily from commercial and industrial rivalry. I do not think that England's hatred of Germany springs primarily from her wrath at the violation of Belgium and the atrocities com-